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which all the material equipment of his life is secured. Huts, granaries, fences, beds, stools, drums, canoes—in fact, all the furniture of domestic and village existence—are made of wood. Bark forms the rope (*umucando*) used for nets and snares, or the rough strands (*lushishi*) with which poles are lashed together in building.

The skill and the speed with which the Bemba handle wood is amazing. A new-comer to the country is surprised to hear a fellow European arriving at his camp shout casually, 'Make me a table and a couple of chairs just there,' and to see the furniture grow out of the ground in the space of about half an hour. But this expertize, very widespread among the forest peoples of Africa, is ultimately dependent on the natives' knowledge of the properties of the different woods in their environment and on their perpetual watchful attention of the bush around them. Near their homes they must know where to find straight poles for uprights, pliable branches for roof frames, and hard wood for the handles of spears and other implements, and for five or ten miles round a village there are everywhere signs that an axe has been at work—a trunk newly barked for fibre, a raw stump showing where a tree has been felled, or a pile of new wood shavings marking where poles have been cut and trimmed before being carried back to the settlement. It is no wonder that the people seem to have a passionate interest in trees as such. Torday classifies many of these Central African peoples as 'forest-dwelling Bantu',[1] and it is an apt term.

All Bemba children of the age of 10, or even under, can point out the different species of trees quickly, even though they do not know their full uses until later. A European with no botanical inclinations finds it hard to distinguish between so many similar-looking trees, but the Bemba can name fifty or sixty species without hesitation. This interest is mostly utilitarian. The flowers which star the bush with such brilliant colours after the rains do not seem to attract the people, unless they can be used as medicines. Many flowers have no names. Most natives are merely irritated when a white man asks questions about the more striking flowers on the path. They answer, 'That is a flower [*ni maluba*]. Yes, and that is a flower also! They are all just flowers [*malubafye!*].' On the subject of trees, however, their faces light up and they are endlessly willing to talk.

This vivid interest in the forest is reflected in magic belief. It

[1] *African Races*, E. Torday, 1930.